

Southwest Gas
G-01551A-10-0458
In Opposition



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ORIGINAL

Chairman Gary Pierce
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

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July 20, 2011
425 North Sedge Lane
Tucson, Arizona 85748

Dear Gary,

AZ CORP COMMISSION
DOCKET CONTROL

Please vote **NO** on the Southwest Gas rate increase request. I oppose the recent application for a base rate increase (Docket No.G01551A-10-0458) by Southwest Gas Corporation. The proposed increase, which would reportedly raise my monthly gas bill by 14%, is unreasonable, not only for seniors on fixed incomes, but also for working families and people struggling to make ends meet during the current economic recession. When was the last time most of us received a 14% pay raise? As a pensioner I'm receiving only marginal returns on my investments.

Please vote **NO** on the Southwest Gas request for energy efficiency and revenue decoupling tariffs. More taxation and higher utility bills and yet more regulation are not the answer. In a market-based economy, we should be free to choose how much electricity or gas we use, so long as we can pay for it. Utility rates and revenue should continue to be demand-based and dependent on total energy produced, and not through artificial shortages created through some regulatory conservation payback scheme such as revenue decoupling. **PAYING UTILITIES MORE TO PRODUCE LESS** would amount to corporation welfare, with ratepayers forced to pick up the tab. Just because California and a few other states have implemented such programs does not, in my opinion, justify its application here in Arizona. I would remind you that California, the soft energy and energy "efficiency" capital of the U.S., also has the highest utility rates in the country. The solution to the decoupling question is to **RESCIND THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY MANDATE**. Cuts of 22% by the year 2020 are unobtainable and would devastate the economy and jobs. Such mandates imply shortages where in fact no shortages exist. We have domestic coal and natural gas in abundance, so why the cutbacks? Mythological man-caused global warming from fossil fuels use has been discredited and no longer accepted by a majority of the public; your carbon footprint does not matter. Fossils fuels are our cheapest, most efficient source of energy available by far, and we need to stop penalizing and taxing their use.

Arizona's economy depends on the availability of low-cost, efficient energy. Mandated cuts and taxation of energy are nonsense, resulting in higher costs to ratepayers and damaging our economy and jobs base.

Respectfully yours,

Richard Huebschman

Arizona Corporation Commission
DOCKETED

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